

SD Site Stars in Time Team

Fort James was built near the Jim River, not far from what is the city of Mitchell today. This little-known historic site, dating back to Civil War times, is the focus of the national PBS show **Time Team America** on Wednesday, Aug. 12, at 7 p.m. CT/ 6 MT.

In the final episode of the summertime series, the team rides to the rescue of this Wild West time capsule.

In 1865, a unit of cavalry soldiers thought they had volunteered to fight in the Civil War. Instead, they found themselves sent west to defend pioneer settlers against angry Sioux Indians in what is now South Dakota. Upon their arrival, the soldiers built one of the few stone forts on the American frontier.

The trouble started in 1862 when the U.S. government and middlemen shorted the Santee Sioux tribe on guaranteed annuities. In the face of starvation, Chief Little Crow went to war. He was defeated, but even a



Children from the Hutterite community that owns the site stop by to watch the activity.

Photo by Doug Brazill



This shard is part of a bottle that may have contained "medicinal" bitters.

Photo by Doug Brazill

only 11 months.

The fort's quartzite walls still peek out from under a grassy field. Tune in as the team maps, digs, and uncovers what remains of Fort James during the hot South Dakota summertime.

The **Time Team America** series has other South Dakota connections, as well. The archaeology team for the series is led by South Dakotan Adrien Hannus, a professor at Augustana College in Sioux Falls. One of the archaeologists, Julie Schablitsky, was a student at Augustana.



Dr. Adrien Hannus speaks about his experiences during an SDPB Science Café event in Sioux Falls.

mass execution did not end the conflict. The unrest spread across Dakota Territory. Fort James was built in 1865 to help protect settlers there. But, it turns out the fort was never really needed because most of the Sioux moved further

west. Fort James was decommissioned after